Resilience in Germany – Too weak to secure the future

Germany has lost the race to secure its resilience on many different levels in the last decades. By ignorance and the "Zeitgeist" of the 1990s and 2000s the country has celebrated "a party on a sleeping volcano" and ignoring the signs that much will change sooner then later.[1] The impact of the digital era and its consequences for society and politics were ignored on many levels by all different key actors in Germany.

In 2019 much has changed and German started to be awake that the digital impact will face and that the digital era will be important for the country,[2] but it will need some time to adapt and achieve to gain a resilience as society. Germany in middle of a recession and its dependence on export[3] by lack of a strong domestic impulses,[4] became more dependent on China[5] and in also as result by the "Energiewende" and focusing on just few resources it is forced mostly securing its energy supplies on Russia.[6] "Germany's problem is a lack of realism with respect to its own fragile strategic situation," said Jan Techau, a director at The German Marshall Fund of the United States, a think tank in a report for Reuters in 2018.[7] The lack of awareness in securing the German infrastructure and the energy[8] and IT infrastructure for public services make Germany highly for external shocks and attacks like in Berlin in 2019.[9] The Hartz reforms and their consequences for social peace are

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1 Financial Times: Why Germany needs to accelerate into the digital fast lane, January 25th 2017 https://www.ft.com/content/31469796-dcd1-11e6-9d7c-be108f1c1dce 12.02.20

2 Politico: Germany's falling behind on tech, and Merkel knows it, July 23rd 2018 / Updated April 19th 2019

https://www.politico.eu/article/germany-falling-behind-china-on-tech-innovation-artificial-intelligence-angela-merkel-knows-it/ 11.02.20

3 Reuters: Germany's export-dependent industry feels pain of trade conflicts, July 2nd, 2019

https://www.reuters.com/article/germany-economy/germanys-export-dependent-industry-feels-pain-of-trade-conflicts-idUSL8N2432YX 11.02.20

4 Ibd.

5 Süddeutsche Zeitung: Mit China in der Zwickmühle, November 30th 2019 https://www.sueddeutsche.de/wirtschaft/china-wirtschaft-deutschland-1.4703128 12.02.20

6 Institute for Energy Research: Germany's Dependence on Fossil Fuels and Russian Gas, August 21st 2018

https://www.instituteforenergyresearch.org/international-issues/germanys-dependence-on-fossil-fuels-and-russian-gas/?__cf_chl_captcha_tk__=e0767d72b3a27ed64e1fd2f42c9ba1b5d8fc3ddb-1581422751-0-AaFP2z1GaJN-ES8daSaEq7mQgjVLm5ABhuExCUu_RAhgi7u8bKlYwrSTDRKriPrlxzPWuemTSzYgJDb32qzmo3aYgmxTIYK_pTfKJoX1rqDuGCEniJlTO_jzJ0QdzVgrachGOSoNrVCbc5IZ7dyt17MkOuz4RFVgWSXU7cLvdJH5y6XkDvmBk9-lii01v2CwFrBRckHyYQcYjxL4P2QOFwbDtWNxvh9lhMuzhFzo0XCaWQDMzradDcslrXRHTW8aNkti4O6GK3oGTx4ZF0FqGyaYEhFUMPuoiFz7pSiDHHS7U6U59NKpoTezEvk0BcLyTeXk4J-l4aIr6FckqOAbW5IWdugy12S5wyzwgDILYPQ-Jmm7Zk6TPGD8YGLBUmmSf26V0dQi7WBs1ulsP0_u4Ghy8_WVllsPSNWeqKHjktsN 11.02.20

7 Reuters: Exposed and dependent: Germany desperate to avoid trade war, May 4th 2018

https://www.reuters.com/article/us-germany-usa-trade-analysis/exposed-and-dependent-germany-desperate-to-avoid-trade-war-idUSKBN1I51WS 11.02.20

8 Herbert Saurugg: Hackerangriff auf die Stadtverwaltung von Baltimore: Wie verwundbar sind europäische Städte?, - Piratenpartei Deutschland, June 9th 2019

https://www.piratenpartei.de/2019/06/09/hackerangriff-auf-die-stadtverwaltung-von-baltimore-wie-verwundbar-sind-europaeische-staedte/ 11.02.20

9 Legal Tribune Online: IT Rechtler zu Hackerangriffen auf Gerichte: "Das war noch ein eher harmloser Angriff", October 10th 2019

dangerous. Rising rent and gentrification in urban centers are an important reason for a debt crisis in German society. Rising rents and debt are especially in eastern Germany a big issue,[10] which supports the rising social tensions in these parts of Germany. Also it could be a threat for the economical stability of the German economy in general.[11] Social inequality and the rising tensions and some kind of "new class struggle", which lead to Protests in France, could also erupt in Germany if the German economy started to struggle.[12] Lower income households in Germany are participating less in elections.[13] This political absence and also their lack of voice in media and public debate already fueled resignations with the current German status quo. The Green Party which tries to sell their policy as some kind of "new policy without any choice" and their lacking answers to social injustice,[14] which is barely a talking point in German national media helps to fuel with arguments that people have to cut back their quality of life for saving the environment,[15] fuels more fears in German society about the eruption of social unrest. The main problem about discussing such debates is also a result by social bias in the German media landscape facing the consequences by its lack of social diversity of German journalists.[16] Social distance of journalist towards social debates and players in debates could be a reason why different topics get more news coverage then other ones, and could be a reason why many critics of the media in western society voice that bias. - The Fridays for Future movement which got a big media coverage in Germany in 2019, more students of the higher educated classes were participating then students from lower income households.[17] The strong media coverage of Fridays for future in Germany helped the movement to grow and both sides profit from the interaction between both sides.[18]

This lack of diversity caused by internal structures in German journalism and the results of social distance, can result in frustration of the public towards their national media. This growing lack of

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https://www.lto.de/recht/justiz/j/justiz-gerichte-hacker-trojaner-angriff-edv-bea-e-akte-digitalisierung-kammergericht-berlin/ 11.02.20

10 Statistisches Bundesamt: Pressemitteilung Nr. 207 June 3rd 2019
https://www.destatis.de/DE/Presse/Pressemitteilungen/2019/06/PD19_207_635.html 12.02.20

11 BIZ-Quartalsbericht, Dezember 2017, p. 12
https://www.bis.org/publ/qtrpdf/r_qt1712f_de.pdf

12 Süddeutsche Zeitung: Der soziale Frieden ist in Gefahr, May 7th 2019
https://www.sueddeutsche.de/meinung/ungleichheit-steuern-staat-sozialer-frieden-1.4435828 12.02.20

13 Bertelsmann Stiftung: Einwurf 2/2015 - Politische Ungleichheit – neue Schätzungen zeigen die soziale Spaltung der Wahlbeteiligung, Gütersloh 2015

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14 The New Statesman: The strange rebirth of the German Greens, January 30th 2019
https://www.newstatesman.com/world/europe/2019/01/strange-rebirth-german-greens 12.02.20

15 RP: Klimaschutz darf nicht auf Kosten der Armen gehen, February 3rd 2019
https://rp-online.de/politik/deutschland/klimaschutz-umweltpolitik-trifft-die-armen_aid-36480701 13.02.20

16 Telepolis: Two Riders were approaching: Der Anfang vom Ende der deutschen Medien, September 11th 2018,

https://www.heise.de/tp/features/Two-Riders-were-approaching-Der-Anfang-vom-Ende-der-deutschen-Medien-4158735.html
& Alexandra Borchardt, Julia Lück, Sabine Kieslich, Tanjev Schultz, Felix M. Simon: Are Journalists Today's Coal Miners?, The Struggle for Talent and Diversity in Modern Newsrooms –A Study on Journalists in Germany, Sweden, and the United Kingdom, Mainz 2019
https://www.uni-mainz.de/downloads_presse/02_Studie_Journalismus_Report.pdf 12.02.20

17 Moritz Sommer, Dieter Rucht, Sebastian Haunss und Sabrina Zajak: Fridays for Future. Profil, Entstehung und Perspektiven der Protestbewegung in Deutschland. Institut für Protest- und Bewegungsforschung, August 2019, pp. 11–14, pp. 31–35
& Dieter Rucht: Faszinosum Fridays for Future, in: Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte 47-48/2019, pp. 4-9
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18 Ibd. p. 4

trust in the media supports the growing tensions inside a society and "fake news" and other methods of informational warfare used by external actors have better chances to succeed their agenda.

The reforms in education after the 2000 so called "Pisa Schock" let to a shift in the educational system. While the Pisa Study showed that important for educational success is mostly that kids from higher incomes achieve better results in schools compared with students from lower income households.[19] It had been barely a deeper debate for any changes or even harsh consequences to solve this problem. In the media it has been widely reported. In 2019 the "Bericht Bildung" by the German Ministry of Education points out that better education supports the political and social participation.[20] But in fact there are still many invisible barriers. A report of the World Economic Forum in 2020 about Social Mobility points out "*[d]espite high education access and quality (with low pupil-to-teacher ratios across pre-primary, primary and secondary education), there is limited variation of student socio-economic status within certain schools. With a score of 59.7 on the Fair Wages pillar, there is room for improvement, perhaps by decreasing the high incidence of low pay across its labour force and another area where progress could be made is within the Lifelong Learning pillar (69.6) by increasing the availability of training for the unemployed, which could contribute to decreasing the percentage of unemployed among workers with basic education*."[21] In result the upper middle class and upper class can defend their "privileges". In many areas schools which lay in a "bad district" by demography parents with higher income move to other areas to avoid that their kids will have to join a "bad school" and as a result schools in certain critical areas and hotspots become even less diverse and attractive,[22][23] but also they a in dangers to get more ignored by the political level like it had happened to a school in Berlin.[24] - By these barriers a huge group of German society which already is under social pressure and struggle for political and social awareness these barriers keep them out of taking active part in political and social debates. The consequences is a lack of representation and even the silence of their voice in political and social life. This leads to resignation and frustration and the demobilization makes it difficult to analyze and spread awareness for this issue and threat for stability.

How to rise the resilience in Germany? - Getting rid of our bias in our Heads!

How to rise the resilience in Germany? Society needs to bring back people together. Somehow it is

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19 J. Baumert u. a.: PISA 2000. Basiskompetenzen von Schülerinnen und Schülern im internationalen Vergleich. Deutsches PISA-Konsortium, Opladen 2001

20 Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung: Bildung in Deutschland 2018, Berlin 2019

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21 World Economic Forum: The Global Social Mobility Report 2020 - Equality, Opportunity and a New Economic Imperative, Geneve 2020, p. 24 http://www3.weforum.org/docs/Global_Social_Mobility_Report.pdf 12.02.20

22 Taz: Die Emigration der mobilen Mittelschicht, Feburary 17th 2002, https://taz.de/!1187220/ 13.02.20

23 SZ:"Absetzbewegung der Mittelschicht", December 23rd 2018 https://www.sueddeutsche.de/bildung/schulen-absetzbewegung-der-mittelschicht-1.4262629 13.02.20

24 Tagesspiegel: Diese Schule zeigt, wie man im Berliner Chaos überlebt, December 20th 2019, https://www.tagesspiegel.de/themen/reportage/sieben-jahre-baustelle-diese-schule-zeigt-wie-man-im-berliner-chaos-ueberlebt/25353706.html 13.02.20

simple and complicated at the same time. Our society, media and needs to become more diverse. We need more different people with different social backgrounds, point of views in workspace, at places were we live. We need maybe with quotas to work that at different areas there live not just people from one social subgroup together. People need to interact in daily life together and communicate. We need to understand others. This could be archived by a common public service for all young Germans. Similar to a draft we need to find some tool to bring a young society together and to connect them over the barriers of social groups and classes. We need to secure incomes and tell society where in fact our government and as society. Fore example we spent more money for. Richer and higher income households get more benefits by the state then lower income households.[25] In the media people really need to get payed and get a secure job and income. With secure payment and income people in the media won't be less from rich backgrounds and will be less forced to write articles which they hope they can sell and the audience wanted to hear. The pressure to fulfill the wishes of the audience and less looking and telling the facts were a main reason why the Claas Relotius could be so successful over a long period with his journalistic fraud.[26] The media needs to tell what happens in plain analysis and telling the plain facts. We need to be more aware of confirmation bias. The impact of social media and especially Twitter is a huge one. We need to be aware of the "Ying and Yang" of Twitter for journalism [27] and to use it for good and not to push for the most extreme debate and bias for the own "political bubble". It is imporant to learn how to use Social media for its purpose and be less in a "race to more extreme positions" to earn more "likes and" positive/negative feedback in social media. The importance cutting facts from fiction, and telling if some dependency by activists and media plattform to political players and lobby groups close to political players need to become transparent as quick as possible. We need to dig into bias and to look outside of Germany. The lack of having a focus on our neighbors like Czech Republic or Poland and their political changes and struggles keep German society outside of a bigger and stronger Europe we need for our future. By judging and looking on political on countries in Central and Eastern Europe by judging form a confirmation biased German point of view,[28] Germany and our society helps to plant the seed of mistrust and the seed for the destruction of our common European House and Future. We can not hope and pray that AI will "fix this for us",[29] like many ads might easily suggest. An AI is just a tool of society but we need to add the mindset in ourselves then we are also able to use an AI but we have to work on ourselves at first.

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[25] Süddeutsche Zeitung: Wer wie viel Geld vom Staat bekommt, February 12th 2020 https://www.sueddeutsche.de/wirtschaft/transferleistungen-sozialstaat-1.4793329 13.02.20

[26] DER SPIEGEL: Hier ist der Abschlussbericht der Aufklärungskommission zum Fall Relotius, May 24th 2019 https://www.spiegel.de/kultur/gesellschaft/fall-claas-relotius-abschlussbericht-der-aufklaerungskommission-a-1269110.html 13.02.20

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[28] FAZ: Die Visegrád-Rebellen, December 16th 2019 https://www.faz.net/aktuell/politik/ausland/budapest-prag-warschau-und-pressburg-schliessen-pakt-der-freien-staedte-16539050.html 13.02.20

[29] Ivy Exec: AI Won't Solve Hiring Bias—But People Can, https://www.ivyexec.com/career-advice/2019/ai-wont-solve-hiring-bias-but-you-can/ 13.02.20